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The **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, a bi-partisan government body known as USCIRF**, is calling for the release of 7 leaders of Iran's Baha'i community who have been imprisoned for over a year. The seven – 2 women and 5 men – were reportedly due to stand trial on July 11. According to the Baha'i World News Service, their families were recently informed by authorities that the trial was delayed.

The seven Baha'i leaders – Behrouz Tavakkoli, Saeid Rezaie, Fariba Kamalabadi, Vahid Tizfahm, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Affif Naeimi and Mahvash Sabet – have been charged with a variety of crimes, according to official Iranian news reports. They include "propaganda against the system," "insulting religious sanctities," and "being corrupt on earth," a charge that is punishable by death. The 7 have not been allowed to see a lawyer.

"The charges against these imprisoned Baha'is are baseless and a pretext for the persecution and harassment of a disfavored religious minority. They should be released immediately," **said Leonard Leo, chair of USCIRF**, in a written statement. The statement was issued after USCIRF received a letter from Roxana Saberi, the Iranian American journalist who spent almost four months in Tehran's Evin prison earlier this year.